



# East Windsor Fire Protection Committee

## Amended Special Meeting Minutes

August 9, 2016

7:00 PM

Park Hill

1A Park Hill Road, Broad Brook CT 06016

### Opening

The special meeting of the, East Windsor Fire Protection Committee is called to order at 7:00pm on 8/9/2016 by John Burnham.

### Present

John Burnham (Warehouse Point Fire Commission), Mike Balf (Warehouse Point Fire Commission), Bob Maynard (Board of Selectman), Charlie Miller (at large for District), Absent Steve Smith (Board of Finance), Late to the meeting Nick Macsata (Broad Brook Fire Department) Dale Nelson (Board of Selectman), Thomas Arcari (Broad Brook Fire Department),

Nick Mascata and Peter Larese were sworn in by Dale and given proper paperwork.

Add-on: N/A

Correspondence: See Attached

John Burnham introduces Carl Landolina the attorney for the Warehouse Point Fire District, offering his services to answer questions from the committee and give an update on the progress so far.

Carl Landolina:

- Has been in practice for 30 years and represents 7 other fire districts
- WHPFD worked for over 1 ½ on the adoption of a budget
- Spoke with Josh the Town Attorney, Josh is going to do his due diligence on the options for the current tax problems
- Carl and Josh will speak again and come up with a legal opinion, process for each option

John: The committee would like the information from Carl and Josh in two weeks in time for the next committee meeting

Carl: There are five options

1. Do nothing
2. Create 1 fire district to include the entire town
3. Dissolve the current fire district
4. Put a line back in the budget for the WHPFD
5. Create a special service district

Problem with option 3 is that the WHPFD is a legal entity which owns the assets. If you dissolve the district you will not gain a fire department.

Bob: If you expand the district what would the process be?

Carl: It would take a vote of the people that would be moving into the district. The WHPFD works under a special act, the mechanism to expand the district are not spelled out and therefore you turn to the 105 state statutes. There would be a town meeting of a minimum of 15 people with a 2/3 vote. The WHPFD commission would adopt a resolution; post it in the paper twice and on the town pole. The community could petition to have an all day referendum.

John: I think we should get an outline of only 2 options to save time and effort. The board should focus on 2.

Bob: The WHPFD owns the buildings and trucks the town does not. How would that work?

Carl: The district could lease the land and trucks from the town with an agreement

-Bob will find out if there are any loans or bonds on the BB fire equipment

Bob: The commission would have to change and expand if they become one district

Carl: They could change and create new bylaws

John: If we the EWFPD pick option 1 the details could be discussed

Peter: Insurance of the fire trucks if they are leased to the district from the town might be difficult.

Carl: That would be something to look into and I would recommend that the town sells the trucks to the district for a dollar. The town and district would need to be ready with agreements to go in effect if the district expands. BBFD needs to be onboard and included in the process.

Peter: Is there a 5 year plan for new trucks?

Carl: There would be a five year plan and the district would not be able to borrow money without a vote. WHPFD put money in their budget this year for a 5 year plan.

Charlie: There is always the option to bond for new trucks.

**Public Comment:**

N/A

**Approval of minutes from last meeting**

Motion to approve the minutes from 7/28/2016 as presented Charlie Miller, Bob Maynard second. All in favor

**Old Business:**

1. Current tax 2016-2017 (John we should fix 2017-2018 and beyond before we work on 2016-2017)
2. Tax 2017-2018

Mike: Somers had to hire a fulltime paid fire chief this past year, it cost Somers more than 70,000.00 plus benefits

John: 1 district would solve all the current problems

Charlie: Where is the money collected?

John: The money is collect by the town and currently on one tax bill. The town will pay the district by August 15<sup>th</sup>

Bob: The town will pay the district per the grand list \$575,624.12 and they will owe the town 2% which equals \$11,512.48

John: This is not how the WHPFD planned for the tax for the current year to go. This all happened at the last minute and come from the town attorney

Carl: The district has an agreement with the town to get paid upfront from the town. The town then has the right to collect delinquent taxes and keep the interest

-Nick and Tom join the panel

Carl recapped the previous discussion

Next meeting will be 8/23/2016 @ 7pm

Nick: I have a military background, what is the mission of the committee? What is the end?

John: 1<sup>st</sup> our mission is to smooth out the 2016-2017 tax issue, 2<sup>nd</sup> to make it fair for the 2017-2018 and moving forward.

Nick: I think it is a disadvantage for the BBFD to have the meeting on Tuesday, it is our meeting night, Bob needs to help with this issue and make it fair.

Bob: 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday @ 8pm

4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday @ 7pm

Nick: It is important to know the environment and changing factors in the fire service. BB was awarded a grant to help increase volunteers which has helped but there is still a decline in volunteerism. This means that there will be an increase in cost for paid staff and insurance. When looking at all the options this must be considered. Having one district would help with this, just being another line in the town budget is not effective.

**Public Comment: N/A**

**Members Comment**

Nick: No comment

Tom: No comment

Charlie: No comment

Bob: No comment

Mike: No comment

Peter: I have been a part of a volunteer department and understand the decline in volunteers. I also understand how difficult it is to get money from the town for public safety.

John: I think we have made some good progress, forward motion. I polled scout hall and they all seem to want one fire district.

### **Adjournment**

Meeting was adjourned at 7:57 by John Burnham. The next general meeting will be at 7 on August 23, 2016, at Park Hill.

Minutes submitted by: Jill Caron